

METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR
COUPON MANAGEMENT AND REDEMPTION

ABSTRACT

The present invention provides a system for the electronic management and redemption of coupons. The system includes an integrated coupon card comprising a microprocessor, a random access memory means, a scanner, and a communications port. The coupon card is capable of scanning coupon bar codes from paper coupons and receiving redemption requirement data from a periphery device. The coupon card will allow bar codes and redemption requirement data to be transferred to a periphery device and will store what bar codes were redeemed because they corresponded to purchase data received from a cash register memory. The system further includes one or more periphery devices having a microprocessor, a first communications port for communicating with said coupon card, and a second communications port for communicating with a cash register. The periphery devices receive purchase data from a cash register memory and compare said purchase data to coupon bar codes received from a coupon card in order to determine which coupons are redeemable. The system also includes a server computer which will be connected to the periphery devices. The server computer will collect redeemed coupon information from the periphery devices and also provide the periphery devices with information such redemption requirement data or coupons which may be loaded onto a coupon card. A clearing house will collect coupon redemption information from all servers in the system to create redemption reports. The clearing house allows redemption requirement data and other information to be transferred through the servers to individual periphery devices and/or coupon cards.